

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	07/07/2015
Unique reference number	SC008486
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	The Partnership of Care Today Children's Services
Registered person address	Lansdowne House, 85 Buxton Road, STOCKPORT, Cheshire, SK2 6LR

Responsible individual	Mrs Vivien Snape
Registered manager	Mr Gary Wood
Inspector	Jo Hornby

Inspection date	07/07/2015
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC008486

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Staff give young people consistent care and encouragement which supports them to make good progress in various aspects of their development. For example staff support and encourage young people who have difficulty in engaging with education and through this have achieved AQA certificates.
- Young people say they are welcomed into the home. They are provided with personal items and information about the home when they arrive. This gives them an understanding as to what is expected of them and what the home has to offer.
- The environment is homely and well furnished. Young people are encouraged to personalise their home and this is evident throughout. They are encouraged to express their wishes and feelings in all aspects of the care they receive.
- Staff support young people to learn skills which assist them to live independently. For example developing cooking skills and learning how to budget are some of the life skills they are encouraged to develop.
- Staff work effectively with young people to build relationships with their families. This has resulted in young people being able to maintain positive relationships with important people in their lives, which promotes consistent care.
- A recent incident has meant that improvements are required to ensure that young people are safeguarded in the home. The Registered Manager has identified the shortfalls in staff practice and immediately put plans in place to minimise further risks. This incident has resulted in police involvement and some of the young people have been removed from the home by the placing authority.
- The manager works closely with outside agencies such as the community police. This collaborative approach has ensured that staff and young people are aware of potential risks in the locality.
- When young people go missing from the home, staff are proactive; they go out and search for them. For example they look at bus and train stations and drive to the young person's previous locality in search of them.
- Staff supervision and annual appraisals are held regularly. Individual learning needs are identified and staff report that the manager is supportive and a strong leader.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard with particular reference to the protection of children and young people that may be at risk of harm in the home the registered provider must ensure that staff: (Vi)take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare (Vii)are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies	23/09/2015

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is privately owned.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/07/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
29/05/2014	CH - Full	Inadequate
06/03/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Staff are committed to young people and develop effective relationships with them. They support and encourage young people to achieve their individual goals which have contributed to them making significant progress. For example, some young people have achieved AQA awards and have been settled and invested in enough to sit GCSE exams. This success has boosted young people's self-confidence and self-belief in working towards adulthood and widened their career opportunities. The home provides young people with a warm and friendly environment in which to live. Staff make young people feel welcome from their point of admission. They provide young people with any personal items they may need to help them settle in. This helps young people to feel a sense of belonging. A young person commented, 'My room was lovely and they had bought me shampoo, a hairbrush and other things. That's a really nice touch and when you don't have much, it means a lot. No matter how horrid I have been to staff they are always there for me.' Staff provide young people with regular opportunities for one-to-one discussion and individual weekly meetings. This enables young people to express their views about the home and discuss their lives; this means young people feel valued and have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. A young person said, 'We are always asked what we think about stuff, our plans and what we want to do. If we are not happy about something the staff will ring our social workers or whoever, they are nice like that.' The strength of the positive relationships between young people and staff was evident during the inspection. Young people chatted freely to staff, talking about their plans for the day and asking questions which staff answered openly and honestly. This has resulted in young people building up trusting relationships, which will help them sustain positive relationships in their adult lives. A social worker commented, 'I am very happy with the care provided in this home. Staff are warm and welcoming. Regular updates are beneficial and staff go above and beyond for young people. Young people trust staff and know that they can talk to them about any difficulties they may have without being judged.' Staff have well established relationships with key people who are identified as important to young people. These links are utilised to ensure young people's contact is promoted. This enables them to continue to be integrated into life outside of the home and affords consistent care experiences for them. Young	

people receive support from staff to effectively manage relationship difficulties. Consequently, young people who were experiencing relationship difficulties with their families now enjoy quality contact with them.

Staff acknowledge the achievements young people make and celebrate these with young people, no matter how small they may seem. This helps motivate young people to work towards reaching their individual goals. A staff member said, 'X has done very well since coming here. We have takeaway night on Friday which is an incentive for young people so long as they share washing dishes in the week. Every tiny achievement is acknowledged and young people gain a certificate, no matter how small it may be.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement
A recent safeguarding incident in the home has resulted in a placing authority making the decision to move two of its young people from the home while police continue the investigation. A young person admitted in an emergency made allegations in relation to another young person at the home. The Registered Manager immediately put effective measures in place to ensure that young people are safe. This included waking night staff to monitor and supervise young people at all times. The Registered Manager has identified the shortfalls in staff practice and appropriate disciplinary measures are ongoing. The Registered Manager is in collaboration with safeguarding agencies to reduce future risks to young people. Staff are revisiting safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that they understand how to protect young people, and arrangements have been made for the nurse to visit the home to educate staff regarding the age of consent. Staff are proactive in their efforts to locate young people when they go missing from the home. They actively search for them checking bus and train stations as well as driving to their last known location. Staff have effectively used keywork sessions to help young people identify triggers to this behaviour which helps them consider alternative ways to manage their behaviour. For example, when young people feel like going missing they will keep themselves busy or talk to staff. One young person said, 'I don't go missing now. The staff care and help me understand what else I can do like talking to any of the staff and telling them how I am feeling. That has really helped me.' The home has developed good links with specialist agencies in relation to evaluating and effectively managing young people's risk taking behaviours. This assists in promoting their safety and well-being. A social worker said, 'X would frequently go missing from home and exhibit risk taking behaviours when I first	

took over the case. Staff have built up a relationship with her and worked with me to help X settle down. This has resulted in a gradual reduction in risk taking behaviour until they ceased.'

The home has a rewards system which is used to encourage young people to improve their behaviour. Overall, this is having a positive impact on young people and means there is little use of sanctions or physical restraint. When restraint is used, it is undertaken in line with the home's policy and procedures.

Staff employed at the home are subject to organisational vetting procedures and do not start work in the home until all appropriate checks are complete. All fire, gas and electrical equipment is routinely serviced to ensure they are in good working order. This ensures the environment is safe and that young people are protected from persons who may present a risk to them.

Young people say that they feel safe and that staff teach them how to keep themselves safe by helping them to understand and manage their risks and vulnerabilities. One young person said, 'I feel safe and staff have helped me to understand risk and how I can keep myself safe when I am outside the home. Me and my key worker look at this and they always make sure I am safe. For example, they collect me after I have been on contact with my family because it is dark.'

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The Registered Manager has been in post since March 2007 when the home opened. He is suitably qualified to undertake his responsibilities. The home employs fully vetted and sufficiently qualified staff to meet the aims and objectives of its Statement of Purpose and the needs and numbers of young people. As a result the operations of the home are managed effectively. The manager is child-focussed and has a good understanding of the individual needs of vulnerable young people. Staff feel valued and supported by the manager as good arrangements are in place for the regular supervision and support of staff. Annual appraisals occur which promote professional development. A staff member said of the manager, 'We have supervision and appraisal on a regular basis. We all support each other. We have a mixed age group of staff so we all bring different experiences and we all get along well.' Care planning is of a high standard and is designed to meet the individual needs of young people. The Registered Manager regularly monitors and reviews young	

people's progress which enables him to identify any emerging patterns or trends. Consequently, he can take action swiftly to address any areas of concern that are identified. All significant events concerning the welfare of young people are notified to the appropriate authorities promptly to ensure appropriate action is taken to protect young people, if necessary. He participates in meetings with young people and escalates issues with placing authorities to ensure that their individual plans are effective and achievable.

An independent person visits the home on a monthly basis. Reports are of a good standard and reflect the views of young people and staff. Relevant documentation is reviewed to confirm that it complies with legislation which ensures that the home is monitored regularly to a robust standard.

The Registered Manager works effectively with other agencies and attends relevant safeguarding meetings in order to gather and share information in relation to potential risks in the area. This means that staff are able to educate and help young people on keep safe in the community.

The Registered Manager evaluates the quality of care afforded young people. He learns from feedback, placement success and breakdowns. Comprehensive investigations are undertaken when concerns arise in relation to an issue or incident which occurs in the home. He has identified the shortfalls in relation to the recent incident and is in collaboration with other agencies to ensure that the risks of any future occurrences are reduced. He has reflected on staff practice and is taking appropriate disciplinary measures. He has identified staff learning needs and is revisiting safeguarding policies and procedures.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and

protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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